

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01

DRC-01 /093 W

----- 110891

P R 281624Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY BERN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8451

CSAF

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

CINCUSAFE

CINCEUR

MAC

DIA

21AFCP MCGUIRE AFB NJ

435 MASW RHEIN-MAIN AB GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BERN 4815

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, SZ, GW, AU

SUBJECT: SWISS OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCES FOR USAF AIRCRAFT

REF: STATE 230434

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY MADE PRESENTATION ALONG LINES
REFTEL NOVEMBER 27 TO GULDIMANN, DIRECTOR, SWISS
FEDERAL AIR OFFICE. GULDIMANN'S RESPONSE WAS GENERALLY
POSITIVE, BUT HE RAISED SEVERAL QUESTIONS WHICH HE
WOULD LIKE TO CONSIDER WITH SWISS FEDERAL POLITICAL
DEPARTMENT AND WHICH USG MAY ALSO WISH CONSIDER
FURTHER. END SUMMARY.

2. AIR ATTACHE AND ECONOMIC COUNSELOR MET WITH WERNER
GULDIMANN, DIRECTOR, SWISS FEDERAL AIR OFFICE, NOVEMBER
27, TO REVIEW USAF OVERFLIGHT SITUATION. WE ASSURED
GULDIMANN THAT RESTRICTIONS IN 1970 ARRANGEMENT HAD BEEN
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SCRUPULOUSLY OBSERVED BY USAF AND INDICATED THAT WE FULLY

APPRECIATED THE FUEL AND TIME-SAVING VALUE OF SWISS OVER-FLIGHTS. WE ALSO PARTICULARLY STRESSED DIFFICULTIES WHICH WOULD ARISE IF SWISS AUTHORITIES DEEMED IT NECESSARY PERFORM ACTIONS WHICH COULD BE CONSTRUED BY OTHERS AS INSPECTION OF MILITARY AIRCRAFT. WE THEN SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY OF VISITS BY SWISS OFFICIALS TO RHEIN-MAIN AIR BASE FOR PURPOSE OF OBSERVING NATURE OF CARGO AND PASSENGERS LOADED ON MAC AIRCRAFT SCHEDULED OVERFLY SWITZERLAND.

3. GULDIMANN STRESSED THAT SWISS HAVE NO DESIRE TO STOP USAF OVERFLIGHTS AND ALSO DO NOT WANT TO CREATE NUISANCE FOR US. ON OTHER HAND, SWISS SOVEREIGNTY AND SPECIAL NEUTRALITY STATUS REQUIRES THAT GOS HAVE ASSURANCE THAT 1970 ARRANGEMENT IS BEING ADHERED TO. ALSO OF CONCERN IS POSSIBLE REQUEST AT LATER DATE BY SOME OTHER COUNTRY FOR RIGHTS OVERFLY SWITZERLAND WITH MILITARY AIRCRAFT. GULDIMANN SAID THAT SWISS HAVE NO DESIRE TO HAVE USAF AIRCRAFT LAND AT SWISS AIRPORT TO UNDERGO INSPECTION AND THEREFORE WELCOMED IDEA OF POSSIBLE OBSERVATION VISITS TO RHEIN-MAIN.

4. GULDIMANN ALSO STRESSED THAT GOS HAS NO INTENTION OF ISSUING PUBLIC STATEMENT OR GIVING MATTER PUBLICITY IN ANY WAY IF IT CAN BE AVOIDED. ON OTHER HAND, PUBLIC INTEREST AND/OR PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS CONCERNING SWITZERLAND'S NEUTRAL POSITION SOMETIMES ARISE DURING A PERIOD OF INTERNATIONAL TENSION. IN SUCH A SITUATION, GOS MIGHT BE COMPELLED SAY SOMETHING PUBLICLY. EMBOFF SHOWED GULDIMANN TEXT OF POSSIBLE CONTINGENCY STATEMENT SET FORTH PARA 3 REFTEL AND GULDIMANN SAID SUCH LANGUAGE SEEMED ACCEPTABLE.

5. WITH REGARD TO OBSERVATION VISITS, GULDIMANN SAID THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO SWISS THAT VISITS BE UNDERTAKEN WITH BRIEF OR NO ADVANCE NOTICE. HE ALSO STRESSED THAT VISITS WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN VERY INFREQUENTLY. AIR ATTACHE SUGGESTED POSSIBLE PROCEDURE ALONG LINES USDAO/BERN 080825Z, NOVEMBER 1973 (I.E., ISSUANCE OF INVITATION ORDERS FOR DESIGNATED INDIVIDUAL TO MAKE VISIT CONFIDENTIAL

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WITHIN SPECIFIED SEVEN-DAY PERIOD). GULDIMANN SAID THAT SWISS WOULD PREFER NOT GIVE SUCH ADVANCE NOTICE ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZED IMPORTANCE OF CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD PROCEDURES TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING OR EMBARRASSMENT AT RHEIN-MAIN. HE SUGGESTED FOLLOWING POSSIBLE PROCEDURE: FEDERAL AIR OFFICE WOULD INFORM AIR ATTACHE/BERN ON MORNING OF DAY OBSERVATION VISIT PLANNED. AIR ATTACHE OR OTHER REP USDAO/BERN WOULD ACCOMPANY SWISS REPS IN FEDERAL AIR

OFFICE AIRCRAFT WHICH WOULD FLY DIRECTLY TO RHEIN-MAIN.
USDAO REP WOULD ACCOMPANY OBSERVERS DURING VISIT TO
RHEIN-MAIN AND ACT AS LIAISON OFFICER WITH MAC.
GULDIMANN POINTED OUT THAT THIS ARRANGEMENT WOULD ALLOW
BREIF ADVANCE NOTICE AND WOULD SIMPLIFY PROCEDURAL
ARRANGEMENTS. HE SAID NAME OR NAMES OF SWISS REPS COULD
BE COMMUNICATED IN ADVANCE.

6. GULDIMANN SAID THAT GERMAN CLEARANCE FOR SWISS AIR
OFFICE AIRCRAFT COULD BE READILY OBTAINED THROUGH NORMAL
ATC PROCEDURES. HE EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN, HOWEVER,
WHETHER GERMAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE INFORMED BY GOS OF
NATURE OF VISIT TO RHEIN-MAIN AND SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO
CONSIDER THIS MATTER FURTHER WITH FEDERAL POLITICAL
DEPARTMENT (FOREIGN MINISTRY). EMBOFFS NOTED THAT SWISS
OFFICIALS REGULARLY AND ROUTINELY VISIT US MILITARY
INSTALLATIONS IN GERMANY AT US INVITATION WITHOUT ANY
SPECIAL OR PARTICULAR COORDINATION WITH FRG.

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7. REGARDING TYPE OF ACTION BY SWISS DURING VISIT TO RHEIN-MAIN, GULDIMANN SAID SWISS WOULD WISH TO OBSERVE LOADING AND GENERAL PRE-DEPARTURE OPERATIONS. HE ALSO THOUGHT THAT SWISS VISITORS WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST TOKEN OPENING OF "ONE OF TWO CRATES." EMBOFFS SIAD LATTER WOULD PROBABLY CAUSE PROBLEMS AND REITERATED STRONG US POSITION AGAINST INSPECTION OF MILITARY AIRCRAFT. WE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT OBSERVATION OF LOADING OPERATION SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE INNOCENCE OF OVERFLYING AIRCRAFT. GULDIMANN SAID HE WAS NOT SURE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW ASPECTS OF MATTER AND WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE THIS ASPECT WITH POLITICAL DEPARTMENT. HE ALSO ASKED IF USG COULD CONSIDER ALLOWING SYMBOLIC, TOKEN OPENING OF CASE OR TWO. GULDIMANN STRESSED AGAIN THAT HE WAS PERSONALLY CONVINCED ON BASIS HIS OWN VISIT TO RHEIN-MAIN OF INNOCENCE OF OPERATIONS. HE SAID THAT SWISS REPS WOULD BE VERY CAREFULLY AND PRECISELY INSTRUCTED ON WHAT THEY COULD AND COULD NOT DO.

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8. AT CLOSE OF CONVERSATION WE REFERRED TO VOLUNTARY SUSPENSION SINCE NOVEMBER 5 OF OVERFLIGHTS OF SWITZERLAND AND ASKED GULDIMANN IF DURING CURRENT EFFORT WORK OUT NEW ARRANGEMENT HE COULD ASSURE THAT OVERFLYING MAC AIRCRAFT WOULD NOT BE ASKED LAND AND UNDERGO INSPECTION IN SWITZERLAND. GULDIMANN SAID THAT 1970 LETTER WAS STILL VALID AND THAT AS FAR AS SWISS WERE CONCERNED OVERFLIGHTS COULD CERTAINLY RESUME UNDER 1970 TERMS AND CONDITIONS. HE SAID THAT WHILE NO ASSURANCES COULD BE GIVEN, RISK THAT AIRCRAFT WOULD BE ASKED LAND FOR INSPECTION WAS "VERY SMALL."

9. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD WELCOME COMMENT OR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS ON FOLLOWING POINTS: (A) SUGGESTED PROCEDURE FOR OBSERVATION VISITS, INCLUDING USDAO ACCOMPANYING SWISS AIRCRAFT, (B) ON ASSUMPTION EVEN TOKEN OPENING OF CRATES UNACCEPTABLE TO USG, WHETHER ANY OTHER KIND OF TOKEN MEASURES MIGHT BE DEVISED, (C) ANY FURTHER US VIEWS RE NECESSITY FOR INFORMING FRG.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FLIGHT CLEARANCES, OVERFLIGHT AGREEMENTS, MILITARY FLIGHT CLEARANCES, AIR FORCE, NEUTRALISM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 NOV 1973
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BERN04815
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BERN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973119/aaaaagfk.tel
Line Count: 215
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 230434
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01-Oct-2001 by eisnerah>; APPROVED <06-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SWISS OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCES FOR USAF AIRCRAFT
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, SZ, GE, AU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005